



## Local Authority Performance 2006-07

We are pleased to present the second annual local authority performance bulletin. The Welsh Assembly Government introduced a revised performance measurement framework for local government in Wales in 2005-06. 2006-07 is the second operational year of that framework.

We have highlighted some of the most important aspects of local authority performance for 2006-07. We then set out in more detail performance across a range of service areas. Where possible we have tried to simplify the descriptions of the performance indicators for use within this bulletin. We have also rounded the data in order to make comparison easier.

### Some facts for 2006-07

A summary of some of the key facts for 2006-07 is shown below. We have also indicated where performance has improved (↑) or worsened (↓) compared to 2005-06 where possible.

- Local authorities recycled 18% of waste collected compared to 15% in 2005-06. ↑
- The proportion of waste sent to landfill improved by 2%, falling to 69%, and ranged from 49% to 82% across the country. ↑
- 2.1% of all school leavers left school without a recognised qualification compared to 2.3% in 2005-06. ↑
- Local authorities took an average of 113 days to discharge their duty to statutorily homeless households – a 43% increase on the 79 days taken in 2005-06. ↓
- The number of homeless households in Bed & Breakfast accommodation fell by 10%; the number of homeless families with children in such accommodation fell by 16%. ↑
- 2006-07 saw reported improvements in the energy efficiency of housing stock, with a 7.9% reduction in energy use between 2004-05 and 2005-06. The same period saw a 6.9% reduction in Carbon Dioxide emissions. ↑
- During 2006-07, around 800 new affordable housing units were provided across Wales. This represents 9% of the 8,600 new housing units provided. **NEW**
- 2006-07 saw the percentage of high risk premises inspected for Food Hygiene remain at 91%. ↔
- 88% of children in local authority care had a care plan in place at the time of their first placement compared to 86% in 2005-06. ↑
- The rate of people occupying hospital beds whilst waiting for social care rose by 1.8 per 1,000 population aged 75 and over. This was the first rise since 2003-04. ↓
- 79% of the 10 thousand adult carers identified were offered an assessment of their needs ranging from 24% to 100% across authorities. **NEW**
- On average, 11.3 days per employee were lost due to sickness in 2006-07 compared to 11.7 days in 2005-06. ↑

More detailed performance information is provided in the pages that follow.



## Environment and transport

*Local authorities are responsible for improving the local environment by collecting and recycling waste, maintaining pavements, roads and street lights, and removing litter and fly-tipping. The state of local roads, amounts of litter, and the availability and efficiency of services such as recycling all contribute to the public's perception of their local services.*

### Waste collection and disposal

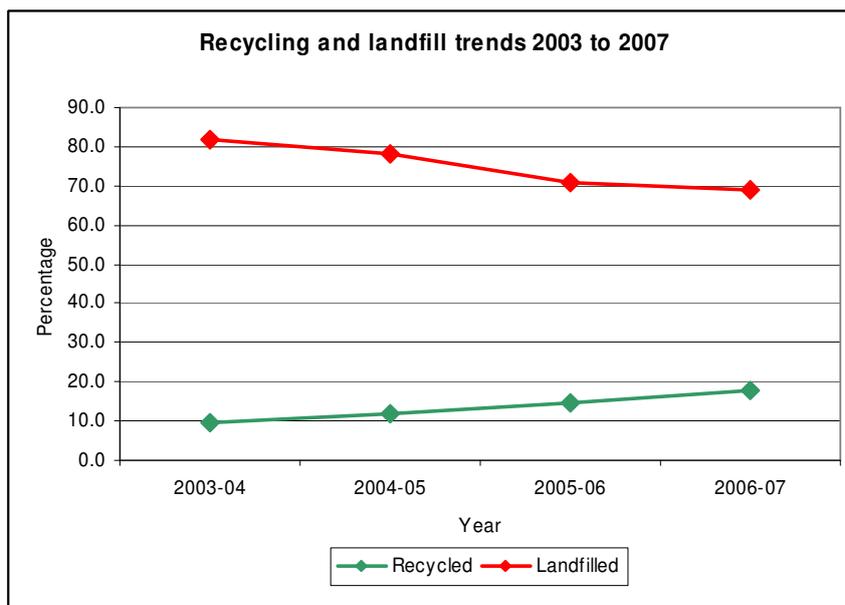
In 2006-07 local authorities collected 1.8 million tonnes of waste compared to 1.9 million tonnes in 2005-06.

Sending waste to landfill sites is costly and unsustainable, and contributes to climate change. Local authorities must try to divert waste away from landfill, and face a regime of fines and penalties if they do not. Making effective use of alternative solutions such as recycling, re-use, composting and converting waste into energy is key.

The percentage of households covered by a kerbside collection service for recyclables continued to increase, rising from 78% in 2005-06 to 87% in 2006-07. This ranged from 46% in Conwy to 100% in Swansea, Bridgend and the Vale of Glamorgan.

Of the 1.8 million tonnes of waste collected, 17.9% of municipal waste collected was either recycled or re-used. This compares to 14.7% in 2005-06. In 2006-07 the percentage of waste recycled ranged from 12% in Cardiff to 37% in Ceredigion.

A further 9.7% of waste was composted in 2006-07 compared to 8.5% in 2005-06. This ranged from 4% in Blaenau Gwent to 20% in Powys. In the same period the percentage used to recover heat and power also increased, from 0.6% to 0.9%.



Of the 79 thousand tonnes of incinerator residues, construction and demolition wastes, abandoned vehicles and beach cleansing wastes collected in 2006-07, 82% was recycled compared to 75% in 2005-06.

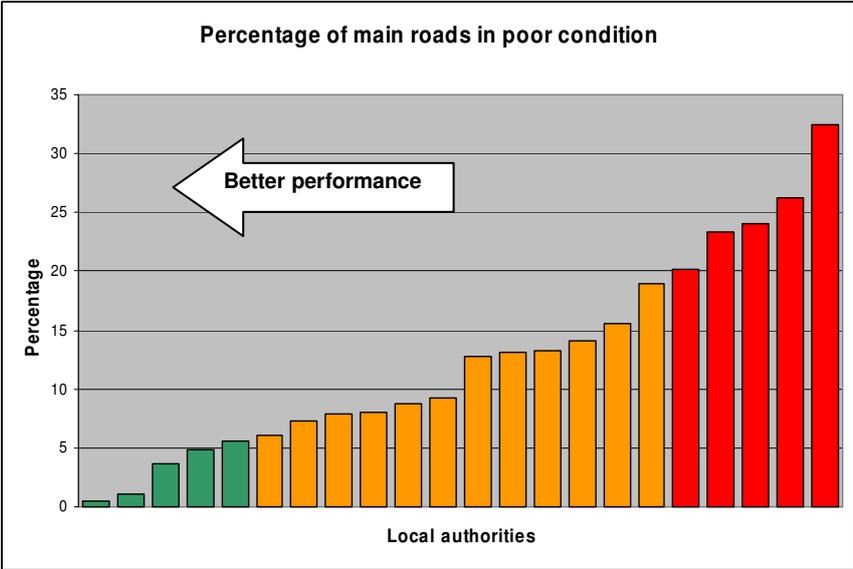
Consequently, the percentage of municipal waste sent to landfill fell from 71.3% to 68.6% in 2006-07. This ranged from 82% in Cardiff to 49% in Bridgend.



*Transport and highways*

Local authorities are responsible for maintaining all public roads in Wales, apart from motorways and trunk roads. Across Wales the road network is just over 34 thousand kilometres in length. Over half of this is made up of “unclassified” or minor roads.

Local authorities surveyed around 3,500 kilometres of main roads and 9,800 kilometres of minor roads. From the survey results authorities reported that the percentage of main roads in poor condition was around 13%, similar to the 2005-06 figure. For 2006-07, this ranged from 1% in Anglesey and Neath Port Talbot to 33% in Ceredigion. Of the other roads, 12% were in poor condition. This has improved from 16% in 2005-06.



Over half of the total length of footpaths and other rights of way which local authorities surveyed were judged to be easy to use by members of the public.

Over the year there was an increase in the number of days taken to repair broken street lamps, from 4.2 days in 2005-06 to 4.8 days in 2006-07. This ranged from one day in the Vale of Glamorgan to 18 days in Monmouthshire.

2006-07 saw an increase from 75% to 78% in the percentage of older people that have been issued with a concessionary travel pass.

Of the 57 thousand inspections of highways and other public spaces that took place during 2006-07, 97% were deemed to be of a high or acceptable standard of cleanliness. This ranged from 76% in Blaenau Gwent to 100% Carmarthenshire.

93% of reported fly tipping incidents were cleared within five working days. This ranged from 76% in Monmouthshire to 100% in the Vale of Glamorgan and Newport.



## Education

*Local authorities are responsible for planning and delivering education for children in partnerships with schools and governing bodies.*

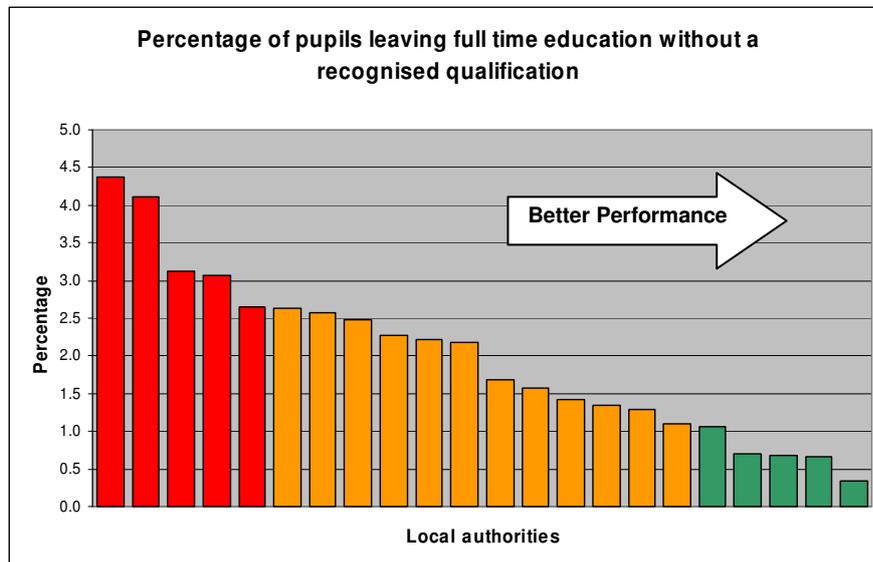
*Please note that the 2006-07 education performance information is based on the 2005-06 academic year.*

In the 2005-06 academic year, local authority maintained schools educated over 205 thousand children of primary school age and 186 thousand of secondary school age. Nearly all primary school classes had 30 or fewer pupils, with an average pupil teacher ratio of 16 to one.

The same period saw secondary school attendance fall by 0.4% to 90.1%. Primary school attendance was reported for the first time within the framework at 93%.

Of the children assessed, 19% received a Teacher Assessment in Welsh as a first language at Key Stage 2, compared to 16% at Key Stage 3. Figures reported in 2005-06 showed 19% at Key Stage 2 and 14% at Key Stage 3.

The percentage of children achieving level 4 or above at Key Stage 2 in the core National Curriculum subjects of English or Welsh (first language), mathematics and science remained at 74%, ranging from 68% in Blaenau Gwent to 79% in the Vale of Glamorgan and Newport. Similarly, the percentage of children achieving level 5 or above at Key Stage 3 in the core subjects remained at 58%. This ranged from 47% in Blaenau Gwent to 69% in Powys.



2.1% of all secondary school children who left full time education at the age of 15 or 16 did so without a recognised qualification, compared to 2.3% in the previous year. For the 2005-06 academic year this ranged from 0.3% in Ceredigion to 4.4% in Torfaen. The proportion of children in care who left without a recognised qualification fell from 19.9% to 18.1%.

During the year there were 425 permanent exclusions - 39 from primary schools and 386 from secondary schools - losing pupils a total of almost 11 thousand days education between them.

## Housing

*Local authorities are responsible for identifying and meeting local housing needs within their local areas. They provide public housing as well as working with other providers, such as*



registered social landlords to meet housing needs. They also have a statutory role to assist homeless households and work with the private sector to support and fund improvements in housing stock.

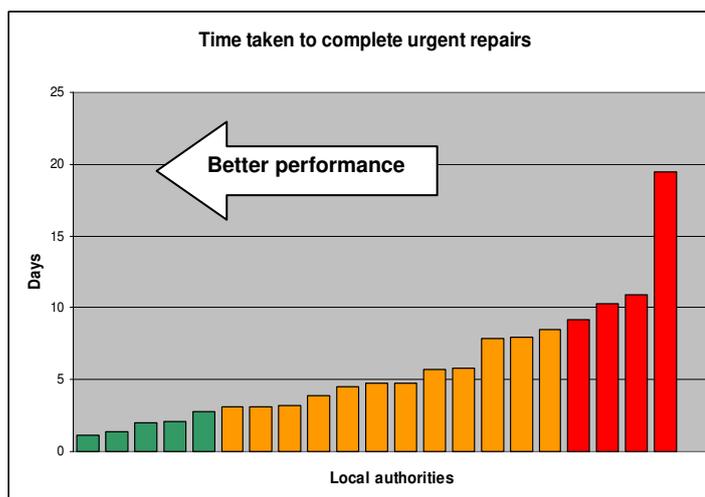
### Local authority maintained housing

In 2006-07, 21 of the 22 local authorities were responsible for managing and maintaining a social housing stock. In 2006-07 the total number of local authority dwellings was around 156 thousand.

During 2006-07, local authorities collected 97% of the rent due to them from tenants in permanent accommodation and 67% from tenants in temporary accommodation. By the end of the year local authorities were owed £17.9 million in rent arrears for permanent accommodation and £1.1 million for temporary accommodation. This represents 4% and 18% respectively of the total rent due for permanent and temporary accommodation.

On average it took 85 days to re-let permanent accommodation and 39 days to re-let temporary accommodation. The total rent lost due to these vacancies was around £10.5 million compared to £9.6 million in 2005-06.

Local authorities are responsible for repairing houses that they own; repairs are classified as 'emergency', 'urgent' and 'non-urgent,' in order of priority. Local authorities completed 142 thousand emergency repairs in 2006-07. The average time taken to complete them was less than one day, with only five local authorities reporting that they took an average of more than one day.



During 2006-07, urgent repairs took an average of seven days to complete and non-urgent repairs took an average of 33 days to complete. The time taken to complete urgent repairs ranged from one day on the Isle of Anglesey and Monmouthshire to 20 days in Flintshire. Non-urgent repairs ranged from 13 days in Newport to 138 days in Flintshire.

### Homelessness

During 2006-07, 15,600 households presented themselves to local authorities as homeless. 6,000 of these households were found to be statutorily homeless, of which 2.5% or 144 households had already been classed as statutorily homeless at least once within the last two years.

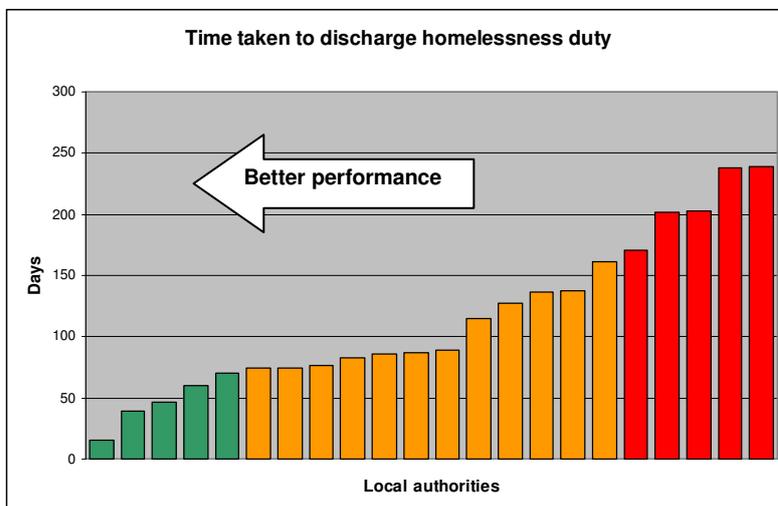
Local authorities are responsible for providing timely support and accommodation to those households who are, or may become, homeless and preventing people from becoming homeless.



In 2006-07, 85% of households presenting as homeless received a decision on their eligibility for assistance within 33 working days. This compares with 83% in 2005-06. For 2006-07, this ranged from 65% in Cardiff to 100% in Blaenau Gwent.

Local authorities took an average of 113 days to discharge their duty to those households who were accepted as statutorily homeless – a 43% increase on the 79 days taken in 2005-06. In 2006-07, this ranged from 16 days in Merthyr Tydfil to 239 days in Monmouthshire.

Ideally, local authorities should find homeless people somewhere permanent to live, rather than placing them in temporary accommodation such as Bed and Breakfasts.



Homeless households spent an average of 118 days in temporary accommodation in 2006-07, ranging from seven days in Merthyr Tydfil to 227 days in Cardiff. This compares to an average of 102 days in 2005-06.

In 2006-07, the use of Bed and Breakfast (B&B) accommodation fell with 3,400 homeless households placed in B&B accommodation, almost a quarter (750) of whom were families with children. In 2005-06, 3,750 households and 890 homeless families were placed in B&B accommodation. In 2006-07, the number of homeless families with children in B&B accommodation ranged from zero in Denbighshire and Blaenau Gwent to 118 in Pembrokeshire.

### *Housing and council tax benefit*

In 2006-07, there were 305 thousand claimants of Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit across Wales, with 170 thousand new claims being processed over the year. Local authorities also processed 311 thousand changes of circumstance.

2006-07 saw an improvement in the speed of processing new claims. The average time taken to process new claims fell from 37 days in 2005-06 to 32 days in 2006-07. The average time taken to process a change in circumstance fell from 17 days in 2005-06 to 13 days in 2006-07.

During this time, the accuracy of processing remained constant, with 98% of benefits being paid correctly. Of the overpayments identified during the year, which amounted to £17.8 million, 68% were recovered. This compares with 70% of the identified £18.1 million in 2005-06. The total amount outstanding at the end of the year, including overpayments identified in previous years, amounted to £29.3 million.



## Other housing

Direct action by local authorities meant that 1.5% or 263 of the 17,600 private sector dwellings that had been vacant for more than six months were returned to occupation. This is lower than the reported figures for 2005-06, which were 317 or 1.6%.



A Disabled Facilities Grant is a local authority grant to help towards the cost of adapting your home to enable you to continue to live there. In 2006-07, it took an average of 545 days to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant compared to 593 days in 2005-06. In 2006-07, this ranged from 318 days in Gwynedd to 1,112 days in Pembrokeshire.

The average time taken to deliver adaptations where the Disabled Facilities Grant process was not used was 215 days for local authority

tenants, ranging from 29 days in Flintshire to 715 days in Conwy. For residents of private dwellings, adaptations took an average of 85 days, ranging from four days in Torfaen to 461 days in Conwy.

2006-07 saw improvements in the energy efficiency of housing in Wales, with a 7.9% reduction in energy used between 2004-05 and 2005-06. This ranged from a 1.1% reduction in Ceredigion to a 16.5% reduction in Swansea. The same period saw a 6.9% reduction in Carbon Dioxide emissions, ranging from 1.1% in Wrexham to 13.2% in Swansea.

## Planning and Public protection

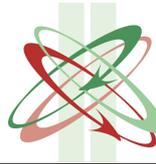
*Local authorities determine whether individual building and other developments should go ahead taking into account the proposed development's impact on amenities and the environment. Local authority regulatory services, including environmental health and trading standards, are important frontline services that protect the quality of life and well being of local communities.*

### Planning

During 2006-07, around 800 new affordable housing units were provided across Wales. This represents 9% of the 8,600 new housing units provided. Two thirds of the new housing units built were built on previously developed land (so-called "brownfield sites").

In the same period, local authorities determined over 32 thousand planning applications compared to 34 thousand in 2005-06. 27 thousand applications or 84% were approved in 2006-07 compared to 29 thousand or 86% in 2005-06.

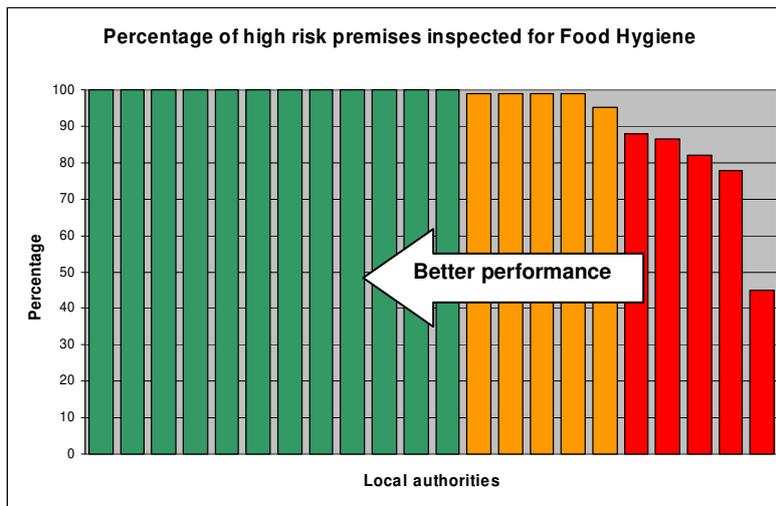
In 2006-07, 14 thousand applications determined came from householders. Of these 74% were determined within eight weeks compared to 73% in 2005-06. In 2006-07 the percentage approved within eight weeks ranged from 46% in Ceredigion to 90% in Anglesey and Conwy.



62% of cases where complaints were received relating to a single alleged breach of planning control were resolved within 12 weeks compared to 64% during the previous year. This ranged from 29% in Flintshire to 98% in Merthyr Tydfil.

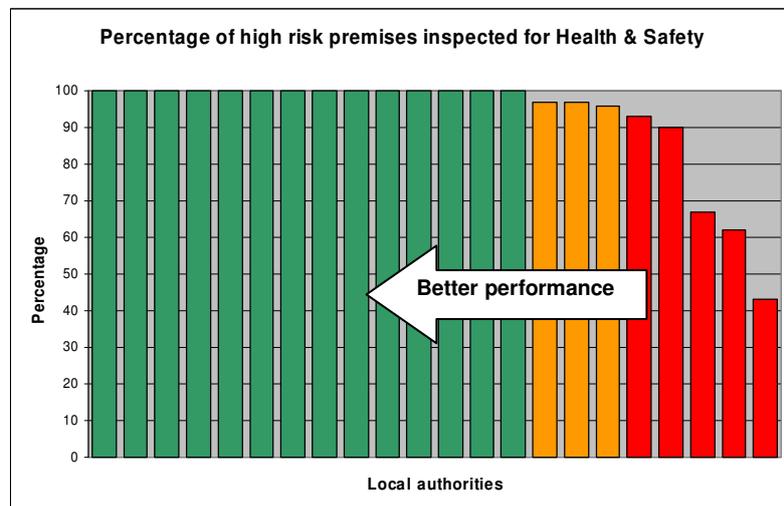
### Public protection

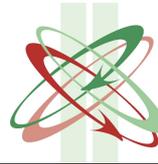
Local authorities are required to inspect premises deemed to be “high risk” in terms of: Food Hygiene; Trading Standards; Animal Health; or Health & Safety. In 2006-07, the total number of premises deemed to be high risk amounted to over 16 thousand.



2006-07 saw the percentage of high risk premises inspected for Food Hygiene remain at 91%. This ranged from 45% in Gwynedd to 100% in Anglesey, Wrexham, Ceredigion, Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, The Vale of Glamorgan, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen and Monmouthshire.

Each of the other areas saw improved performance with Trading Standards increasing from 95% in 2005-06 to 97% in 2006-07; Animal Health from 84% to 93%; and Health & Safety from 89% to 92%. For Health & Safety, this ranged from 43% in Swansea to 100% in Anglesey, Wrexham, Powys, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, The Vale of Glamorgan, Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Monmouthshire and Newport.





## Social care

*Local authorities have a statutory responsibility to provide a range of services designed to meet the social care needs of vulnerable people. For example, a local authority will act as a “corporate parent” for children who need care and provide practical assistance to help adults maintain their independence.*

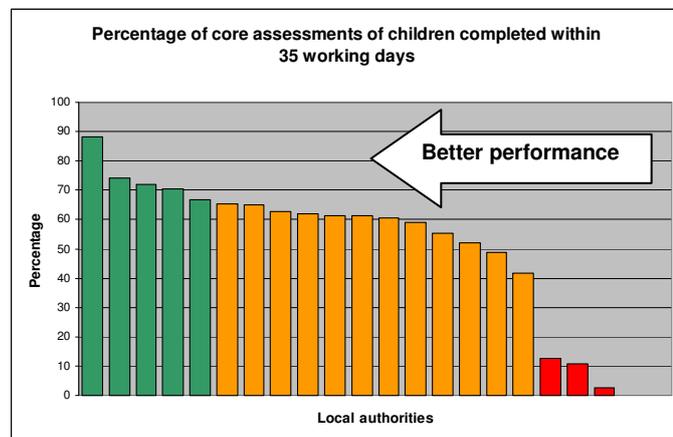
### Social Care – Children

Social Services departments received over 49 thousand referrals relating to children during 2006-07. A decision on how to proceed following referral was made for 82% of these within one working day. This ranged from 16% in Neath Port Talbot to 100% in Swansea, Bridgend and Blaenau Gwent.

Around 20,500 referrals proceeded to an initial assessment, with 59% of initial assessments being carried out within seven working days. This ranged from 19% in Neath Port Talbot to 85% in Bridgend and Cardiff.

Around 3,800 core assessments were carried out during the year, with 56% of these taking place within 35 working days. This ranged from 0% in Isle of Anglesey (where core assessments took an average of 92 days) to 88% in Blaenau Gwent.

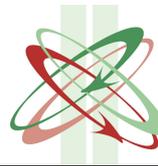
Almost 4,700 children were in care on 31 March 2007, of whom around 1,800 children entered care in 2006-07. 88% of the children entering care had a care plan in place at the time of their first placement. This ranged from 51% in Cardiff to 100% in Anglesey, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire and represents an increase on the 86% reported for 2005-06.



96% of children in care were registered with a GP at 31 March; 76% of children in care had their teeth checked by a dentist during the year. This ranged from 12% in Powys to 95% in The Vale of Glamorgan.

Stability is recognised as being important for children in care. 10% of children in care during 2006-07 experienced three or more placements. This has remained at a constant level since 2004-05. In 2006-07 13.1% of children in care experienced a change of school, (excluding “normal” changes from primary to secondary school and the like). This represents an improvement on the previous year’s figure of 13.5%. Only 42% of children had a plan for their education in place within 20 days of entering care or changing school. This ranged from 4% in Rhondda Cynon Taf to 90% in Denbighshire.

73% of statutory visits to children in care by social care staff took place in accordance with regulations, ranging from 46% in Neath Port Talbot to 98% in Swansea. 86% of children in care had their cases reviewed within the statutory timescales. This ranged from 65% in Flintshire to 98% in Bridgend, Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire.

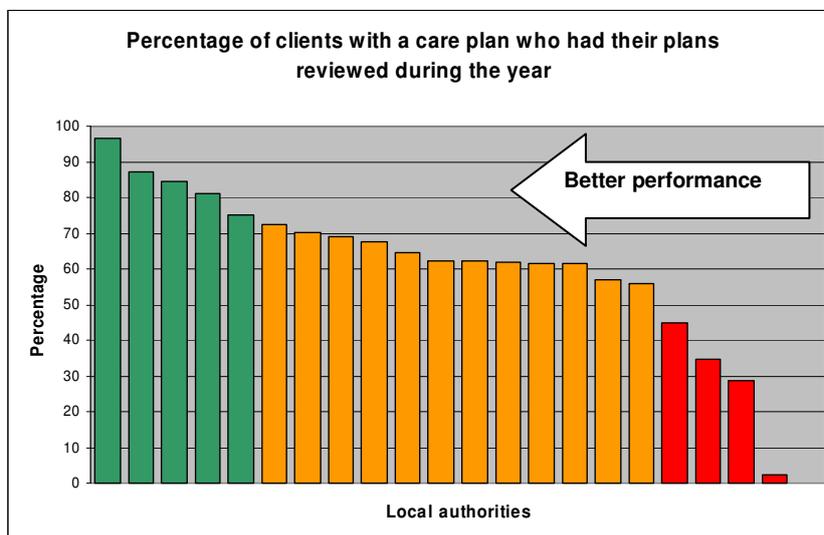


91% of children recorded on the Child Protection Register had their cases reviewed within the statutory time limits. This ranged from 53% in Anglesey to 100% in Denbighshire, Neath Port Talbot, Merthyr Tydfil, Blaenau Gwent and Cardiff.

## Social Care – Adults

During 2006-07, an estimated 81 thousand adults in Wales were in receipt of a social service, with around 74% of them being aged 65 or over. Overall around a fifth of service users were supported in residential care with the remainder receiving community based services.

Social services departments received over 173 thousand enquiries about services for adult clients with 46% of these leading to an assessment. Around 80 thousand assessments were completed during 2006-07. It took an average of 37 days from initial enquiry to complete a care plan. This ranged from two days in Isle of Anglesey to 89 days in Conwy.

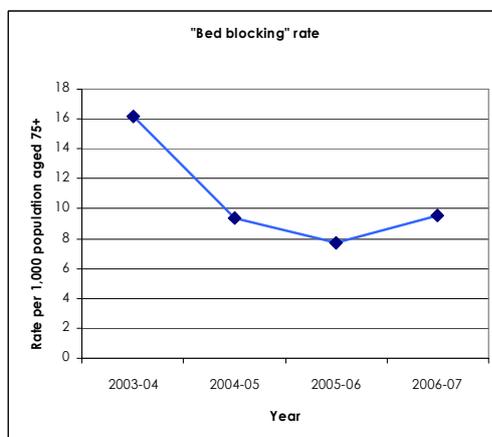


58% of service users with a care plan had their plans reviewed during the year, ranging from 3% in Ceredigion to 97% in Neath Port Talbot.

In 2006-07, local authorities supported 27 people per 1,000 aged 65 or over in care homes and 90 per 1,000 to live at home. This compares to 27 per 1,000 and 86 per 1,000 respectively in 2005-06. In the same period, 93% of social services clients aged 18 to

64 were helped to live in the community – an increase on the 91% reported in 2005-06.

In 2006-07, social services departments received 4,970 adult protection referrals. Around 68% of these resulted in an investigation with 23% of these being admitted or proved.



A delayed transfer of care – also known as “bed blocking” – arises when a person who no longer needs hospital treatment is unable to leave hospital and return to their own home or to a social care setting such as a residential home.

2006-07 saw an increase in the rate of delayed transfers, from 7.7 to 9.5 per 1,000 population aged 75 and older. This is the first rise since 2003-04, when at that point the rate stood at 16.2. During 2006-07, the range of delayed transfers was from 0.2 in Conwy to 46.8 in Torfaen.



Almost 10 thousand carers of adults were identified by social services departments during 2006-07. 79% of these were offered an assessment of their needs, ranging from 24% in Newport to 100% in Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Wrexham, Merthyr Tydfil and Torfaen. Only 34% of carers accepted the offer; 30% of carers assessed were then provided with a service.

## Leisure and culture

*All local authorities provide leisure and cultural services, such as sports and library services. These can enhance local quality of life as well as fitness and literacy levels.*

Increasing participation in sport and physical activity improves fitness and health. In 2006-07, there were over 23 million visits to sports facilities owned by local authorities (such as leisure centres, swimming pools and outdoor pitches and courts) to take part in physical activities. This equates to almost eight visits per person during the year.

Local authorities aim to provide efficient and comprehensive library services. In 2006-07 people used libraries over 15 million times equating to around five visits per person during the year.

Libraries seek to take advantage of new technology to maximise the use of their services. Across Wales there were around 2,700 computers in libraries for public use, equating to around nine computers per 10 thousand people. This ranged from five in Swansea to 16 in Carmarthenshire. However, only 46% of the available computer time was used in 2006-07, ranging from 20% in Merthyr Tydfil to 96% in Ceredigion.

## Corporate Health

*Local authorities are responsible for major public services and expend significant amounts of public money in delivering them. They thus need to display high standards of human and financial resource management.*

### *Human resources*

In 2006-07, local authorities in Wales employed in excess of 137 thousand individuals (including teachers and school-based staff). 11% of these employees left the employment of their authority during the year. This ranged from 8% in Anglesey, Carmarthenshire, Neath Port Talbot, The Vale of Glamorgan and Monmouthshire to 17% in Bridgend.

The percentage of employees declaring that they were disabled remained at around 1.5%. Less than one percent of all employees were from an ethnic minority background.

In excess of 990 thousand days (or shifts) of work were lost due to sickness in 2006-07. This was an average of 11.3 days sickness per (whole time equivalent) employee compared to 11.7 days in 2005-06. Monmouthshire had the lowest sickness absence level at 8.8 days per employee with Blaenau Gwent having the highest with 12.8 days per employee.

### *Financial health*

Council tax and redistributed non-domestic rates account for just over a third of local government income in Wales. Local authorities were due to collect £924 million of council tax and £716 million of non-domestic rates in 2006-07. The percentage of council tax collected remained similar to 2005-06 at around 97% as did the percentage of non-domestic rates collected at 98%.



Prompt payment of invoices is essential for the cashflow of suppliers. In total Welsh local authorities paid close to 3.4 million invoices in 2006-07. 87% of these invoices were paid within 30 days compared to 89% in 2005-06. This ranged from 71% in Swansea to 95% in Conwy, Wrexham and Bridgend.



## Contact details

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The full performance indicator data set is published on the Internet at <http://dissemination.dataunitwales.gov.uk/webview/index.jsp>. For information relating to the dataset please contact Brian Pickett, Assistant Director at the Data Unit, using the same details as set out above.

## Notes

One of the key functions of the Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales is to collect, process, interpret and disseminate statistical data on local government services and activities. Further information about the range of our work can be found on our website ([www.unedddatacymru.gov.uk](http://www.unedddatacymru.gov.uk)).

The National Strategic and Core Set Indicators are part of the Performance Measurement Framework for Local Authorities in Wales. The data for this framework was collected for the first time for the 2005-06 operational year.

National Strategic indicators reflect key priorities identified by the Welsh Assembly Government and local government in Wales. Core Set Indicators provide service/policy area specific performance information.

The Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales has collected data for the framework from the 22 local authorities in Wales. The National Strategic Indicator data has been audited by the Wales Audit Office.

Definitions of, and guidance for, local authorities on the 2006-07 indicator set are also available on our website. This provides a detailed definition for each of the indicators and its classification i.e. National Strategic Indicator or Core Set Indicator.

The colours (Red, Amber and Green) used in performance ranking charts are based on quartile performance. Green indicates top quartile performance; red indicates bottom quartile performance.

## Data sources

All data included in this bulletin is derived from the datasets collected as part of the local government Performance Measurement Framework, except for the following:

**Road lengths:** Welsh Transport Statistics 2006, Chapter 1 Road lengths and conditions. Published by the Welsh Assembly Government, October 2006.

**Number of dwellings:** Welsh Housing Statistics 2006, Table 1.2 Dwelling stock estimates by tenure and local authority, at 31 March 2006. Published by the Local Government Data Unit - Wales. May 2006.

**Number of adults in receipt of social care services:** Statistical First Release, Assessments and Social Services for Adults, 2006-07 (SDR 132/2007). Published by the Welsh Assembly Government, September 2007.



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**Proportion of local government income:** Statistical First Release, Council Tax Levels in Wales 2007-08 (SDr37/2005). Published by the Welsh Assembly Government, March 2007.